[English]

Oil and Natural Gas Exploration

*173. SHRI BADAL CHOUDHURY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey to assess the quantity of under-ground Natural Gas and Oil available in the country particularly in Tripura;

(b) if so, the name of the agency which has conducted the survey and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether some foreign agencies have also been entrusted with the job regarding exploration of oil and natural gas in some parts of Tripura;

(d) if so, the names of agencies alongwith the details of terms and conditions of the agreements with them; and

(e) the details of industries that have been set up for proper utilisation of the natural gas available in Tripura and the other gas based industries planned to be set up in the State?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) ONGC, OIL and several Private/Joint Venture Companies have carried out exploration activities (which also include surveys) in different parts of the country (including offshore) and about 6389.2 million tonnes of inplace reserves of oil and oil equivalent of gas has been established as on 1.4.1996.

As regards Tripura, ONGC has been conducting Geoscientific surveys in the State since 1962 and as a result thereof inplace reserves of 30.10 billion cubic meters of gas have been established as on 1.4.1996.

(c) and (d) A U.S. Company, Okland Oil Company has been awarded the contract for the block AA-ON-3 in the 7th round of bidding. However, Production Sharing Contract for the block has not yet been signed.

(e) An allocation of 1.63 MMSCMD of gas has been made to the following units in Tripura :

	(MMSCMD)
* TSED, Rokhia	0.6000
* TSED, Baramura	0.1380
* TNGC	0.1302
* NEEPCO, Ramchandranagar	0.7500
* CNG (IBP)	0.0160

The expected consumption by these units will fully utilise the gas available in the State.

* TSED - Tripura State Electricity Department
* TNGC - Tripura Natural Gas Company Ltd.
* NEEPCO - North Eastern Electric Power Corporation
* CNG (IBP) - Compressed Natural Gas (IBP)

Oil Industry Development Board

*174. SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the purposes for setting up of Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB);

(b) the amount of cess collected under OIDB during the last three years; and

(c) the manner in which the above amount has been utilised?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) The Oil Industry (Development) Act 1974, provides for the establishment of a Board for the development of oil industry. Under section 2 (k) of this Act, the term "oil industry" includes all activities by way of prospecting or exploring for or production of mineral oil, refining, processing, transportation, storage, handling and marketing of mineral oil, production and marketing of all products, down stream of an oil refinery and the production of fertilisers and petro-chemicals and all activities directly or indirectly connected therewith.

(b) A sum of Rs. 8185.57 crores approximately have been collected during the years 1994-95 to 1996-97.

(c) As per Section 16 of the Oil Industry Development Act, 1974, the cess is to be first credited to the Consolidated Fund of India and the Central Government may after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, pay to the Oil Industry Development Board such sums of money out of the proceeds of cess as the Government may think fit for being utilised for the development of oil industry which, inter-alia, includes petroleum, petrochemicals and fertilizers. To the extent, the cess collection exceeds the sums directly paid to OIDB, it becomes a resource for financing Government expenditure in and for extending direct and indirect budgetary support to the Central public sector undertakings in petroleum, petrochemicals and fertilizers sector.

Indian Port Trust Act, 1908

*175. SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether foreign investments of over $ 18 billion for the overall development of major ports in the country is awaiting requisite amendments in the Indian Port Trust Act, 1908;